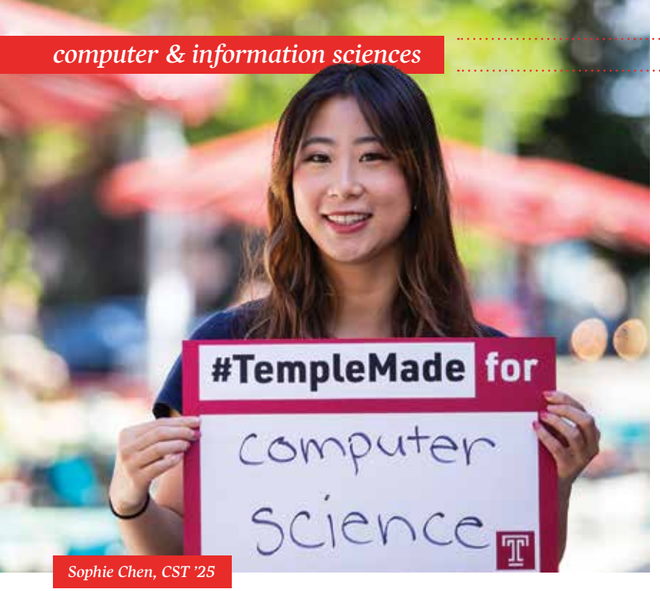

Sophie Chen, CST '25

Andrew Tran, CST '25

PHOTOS: RYAN S. BRANDENBERG

CIS GRAD STUDENTS EARN SECOND PLACE AT AAAI HACKATHON

Shelly Gupta and Hardik Sharma, CST '25, both CIS graduate students working in Professor Zoran Obradovic's Center for Data Analytics and Biomedical Informatics lab, won Second Place at the 39th Annual AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence Hackathon. Designed to inspire innovation and collaboration among AI enthusiasts, hackathon participants work together to develop cutting-edge AI solutions and showcase their projects at the prestigious AAAI conference.

Gupta's and Sharma's team focused on detecting rain-induced landslides using multisensory inputs, developing a spatio-temporal prediction model to enhance early warning systems. "Their achievement at this prestigious competition shows the expertise, innovation and dedication of our graduate students in AI research," said Yu Wang, CIS chair. "Congratulations to Shelly, Hardik and Zoran on this outstanding achievement!"

Top internships lead to top tech jobs

by Lindsay Hargrave and Ayana Jones

Sophie Chen, CST '25, is an associate product manager at Google in the Bay Area and Andrew Tran, CST '25, is a software engineer at Amazon in New York City.

Chen landed a role as an associate product management intern at Google in California—a highly coveted position in tech—her junior year. "There weren't any Temple students who had done this program before and a lot of the students come from schools like Stanford and Harvard," said Chen. "It was definitely a new experience and bit of a challenge for me to navigate, but I knew that I had gotten into the program for a reason and that I was just as capable as those other students."

That intensive summer internship prepared Chen for her next role with Google. "It's a two-year rotational program focused on launching impactful projects by leading efforts across engineering, design, marketing and beyond," said Chen. "Essentially, bridging the connection between software engineers, technical people and the nontechnical parts of building a product. I'll be moving across the country, and while I am nervous to be starting over, I'm excited for what's to come."

"When I was applying for internships, I was able to get an internship at Amazon Web Services," said Tran. "I learned from a ton of people who are really good at what they do. The internship got me a full-time offer for a job as a software engineer."

A recipient of a prestigious Goldwater Scholarship in 2024, Tran is a big Temple fan. "When I was researching Temple, I saw that it had tons of opportunities for me to really explore the many different things I'm interested in," said Tran.

Tran always wanted to go to Japan, "so one of the main opportunities that drew me into Temple was the study abroad program at Temple University Japan." "On top of that, I saw that Temple provides a lot of resources for computer science students," said Tran. "The computer science professors here are involved in many different research areas, and I knew that was something I wanted to look into and pursue."

FAN BRINGS HPC EXPERTISE TO CIS

by Greg Fornia

Bringing deep expertise in high-performance computing, large data processing, scalable algorithms and scientific visualization, Ke Fan is a new CIS assistant professor.

Fan recently completed her PhD in computer science at the University of Illinois Chicago. Her academic journey spans several countries, with degrees from University of Tongji and University of Hankou in China and the University of Pavia in Italy.

Fan has held prestigious research internships at Berkeley National Lab, Argonne National Laboratory and Japan's RIKEN Research Center, where she contributed to advanced computing projects on the Fugaku supercomputer.

Fan is a 2024 recipient of the ACM/IEEE-CS George Michael Memorial High Performance Computing Fellowship, one of the field's top honors. She was also a finalist for Best Research Poster at Supercomputing 2023.

"My research lies in high-performance computing, emphasizing three key areas: optimizing the performance of MPI collectives, enhancing the performance of irregular parallel I/O operations and improving the scalability of performance introspection frameworks," said Fan. "I am also exploring new research areas, including GPU-aware collectives, auto performance tuning for collectives using ML, and ensemble performance visualization tools."

AI COPILOT PROJECT EARNS 'BOOST FUNDS'

by Greg Fornia

Stephen MacNeil, assistant professor, earned "boost funds" for his project titled "Pedagogical Tools to Teach Students to Use AI Copilots." Initiated by the CST Office of the Dean, the funding provides support for faculty to demonstrate proof of concept, collect preliminary data and establish the high potential impact of the proposed idea for future proposal submissions.

"AI technology is everywhere. As people grow more reliant on these systems, they often trust them instinctively, sometimes without critical judgment," explained MacNeil. "Our research seeks to address this by exploring new ways to help users make thoughtful decisions when using AI, creating tools that encourage active engagement and critical thinking rather than passive dependence. This represents a new paradigm, where AI systems intentionally challenge users in the short term to cultivate long-term benefits."

PHOTO: DAVID JOHNSON

"Dr. MacNeil's research aligns directly with CST's mission and has the potential to make significant contributions to artificial intelligence, human-computer interaction and computing education," said Miguel Mostafá, CST dean. "I am confident that this seed funding will not only propel his individual research but also enhance CIS initiatives."

CIS/ACM AWARDEES FOR 2025

The Department of Computer and Information Sciences presented their annual CIS/ACM Awards for CIS students earning departmental, ACM/ACM-W, and other awards.

CIS Outstanding Achievement
Emmanuel Kourtakis and Elle Nguyen

CIS Outstanding Undergraduate Course Assistant
Victoria Dao and Caleb Hageman

CIS Outstanding Student Leadership
Kush Patel and David Loder

CIS Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant
Sanobar Rustamova

CIS Outstanding Graduate Research Assistant
Rafaa Aljurbua

Outstanding ACM Student Service Award
Kush Patel and Sharron Tum